



Public Health Bulletin

A Publication of the Public Health Department, Jess Montoya., Director • www.slopublichealth.org
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Health Department Investigating Rise in Pertussis Cases

The Public Health Department continues to investigate approximately 78 pertussis cases in county residents since August 1, 2005. Adults, adolescents and infants are among those who have been diagnosed.

To date in 2005, there have been five pertussis cases in infants less than four months of age in San Luis Obispo County.

It is extremely important that health care providers in San Luis Obispo County continue their clinical suspicion for pertussis in individuals with history of prolonged cough in the absence of other diagnosis and order appropriate laboratory tests and antimicrobial therapy.

The Public Health Department will collect nasopharyngeal samples directly, at no cost to the patient, when ordered by a medical provider. We ask medical providers to please contact the department at 781-5500 (regular hours) and notify us your patient is being referred to the public health department for specimen collection so we can prepare staff and materials.

If you are considering immunization of your adult and/or adolescent patients with the new vaccines, Boostrix, (licensed for 10-18

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Gregory Thomas, M.D., M.P.H.



Flu Shots Recommended for Seniors, High-Risk Individuals

October and November are the ideal months for high-risk people and others to think about getting a flu shot. Now is the time to protect yourself, your clients and your staff with the annual flu shot.

This year the flu shot will offer protection against the A/(H3N2) influenza antigen, which caused most of last season's flu cases. The 2005-06 trivalent vaccine will offer protection against the following strains: A/California/7/2004 (H3N2)-like, A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1)-like and B/Shanghai/361/2002-like.

In addition to adults over 60, this year we are making a special effort to remind children and adults with a chronic heart or lung condition, renal dysfunction, diabetes or asthma, immunosuppression, cognitive dysfunction that can compromise respiratory function, pregnant women, and infants between 6 and 23 months that they are at higher risk of serious complications from flu and need flu shots.

Also, those working in a health care setting have a good chance

of being exposed to flu and needs to protect themselves, their families and their patients by getting an annual flu shot. Vaccination of healthy people aged 50-59 years is recommended in November and December.

Adults who want to protect themselves can find low cost shots at a wide variety of locations in San Luis Obispo County, including the Community Health Centers of the Central Coast, Med-Stop, Med-Plus, Med Works, as well as their private doctor or HMO, chain pharmacies and even some independent pharmacies like Health Plus in San Luis Obispo. Also, you can access www.Findaflushot.com to locate a clinic near you.

The Public Health Department held its annual flu clinic on Friday, October 28, and administered over 2,500 immunizations to those 60 years and older and others with high-risk medical conditions.

Infants between the ages of 6-23 months are also encouraged to get

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Guidelines for Diagnosing Avian Influenza A

As of October 20, 2005, 118 human cases of avian influenza A (H5N1) and 61 deaths have been reported from Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia and Cambodia since avian outbreaks began in winter 2003. Infected wild birds and poultry continue to be detected in these countries as well as China, Siberia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Japan, Korea, Romania, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Mongolia. Attempts to eliminate H5N1 from the areas through culling of birds have been unsuccessful and additional avian outbreaks and human cases are expected to continue. Although suspected limited person-to-person transmission has occurred, most human cases have been linked to contact with poultry or poultry products. Please see www.who.int/csr/disease/avianinfluenza/en for the latest updates.

Early identification of the importation of avian influenza H5N1 into the United States is critical and depends on health care providers such as you to identify patients with the appropriate exposure history who may have avian influenza.

Recommendation for surveillance, diagnostic evaluation and infection control precautions

We ask all clinicians to maintain a high index of suspicion for H5N1 infection in patients who meet the following criteria and contact the Public Health Department Communicable Disease Control at 781-5500 for assistance with evaluation and specimen submission.

1) Hospitalized patients with:

- Radiographically confirmed pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) or other severe respiratory illness for which an alternate diagnosis has not been explained AND
- History of travel to or immigration from a country with documented H5N1 avian influenza infections in poultry and/or humans as above, within 10 days of symptom onset. For current information on affected countries, see www.oie.int/downld/AVIAN%20INFLUENZA/A_AI-Asia.htm

2) Hospitalized or ambulatory patients with:

- Documented temperature $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($>100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$), AND
- One or more of the following: cough, sore throat and/or shortness of breath, AND
- History of contact with poultry (e.g., visited a poultry farm, a household raising poultry or a bird market) in an H5N1-affected county or with a known or suspected human case of influenza A (H5N1) with 10 days of symptom onset.

Highly Pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1) is classified as a select agent and must be worked with under Biosafety Level (BSL) 3+ laboratory conditions. Laboratories working on these viruses must be certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Therefore, viral culture on specimens from patients meeting the above criteria should NOT be attempted by hospital or private laboratories or by local public health laboratories. Rapid antigen testing can be performed at clinics, hospitals, private and public health laboratories. After review with the Public Health Department, specimens from patients that meet the criteria presented above, who test positive for influenza by rapid antigen testing will be forwarded by the Public Health Department Lab to the California Department of Health Services Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL) for further characterization, including PCR for avian influenza (H5N1).

If a patient tests negative for influenza by rapid antigen testing but the clinician continues to have concern for avian influenza (H5N1) using the epidemiologic and clinical criteria listed above, specimens should be sent to the Public Health Department to be forwarded to the VRDL. Please call Communicable Disease Control at 781-5500 to arrange for transport of the specimen.

All patients presenting to a health care setting with fever and respiratory symptoms should be questioned regarding their recent travel history and managed using the CDC Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette, www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm.

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17th Annual AIDS Update Symposium Set for Nov. 17

Registration will be available soon for the 17th annual AIDS Update Symposium. The event will be held on Thursday, November 17 at the Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo, with registration starting at 11:30, lunch at noon and concluding at approximately 5:15.

Each year, the planning committee strives to further educate our health care providers about the evolving world of HIV/AIDS and the impact it has on the health care system, the community and most importantly, on the people who are living with the disease.

Michelle Shoresman, from the Health Department AIDS Program will talk about the impact of HIV / AIDS in San Luis Obispo County. Dr. Robert Scott will give the larger view of AIDS by discussing how the disease is affecting the global community. Dr. David Spach will present information on what the latest trends are in AIDS research, along with new treatment regimens for patients. Dr. Elyse Singer will discuss the neurological impacts of HIV / AIDS, such as neuropathy. Dr. Tom Maier will act as host for the afternoon.

Continuing education credits will be offered for physicians, PAs, nurses and counselors (LCSWs and MFTs). For more information regarding the Symposium, call Edie Kahn at 781-3660.

Nearly 300 Enrolled in Healthy Kids Program

As of November 1, 2005, nearly 300 children in San Luis Obispo County have been enrolled in the Healthy Kids program. These children now have access to pediatricians, dentist and optometrists that previously may not have been available. Since the start date of September 1, 2005, the program has been inundated with requests for information about children's health insurance.

Families are beginning to understand the importance of establishing a relationship with a pediatrician and dentist to optimize the health and well being of their children. With soaring medical costs, parents may not feel they can afford preventative care or treatment of a communicable disease or the additional cost of prescriptions until the disease has progressed to a much worse condition and expensive health care.

The vision of the Children's Health Initiative of San Luis Obispo County is to help ensure that all children have access to quality health care. The goal of Healthy Kids is to provide affordable health insurance options for every uninsured child in the county, making it easier for families to enroll and keep their children covered.

To find out how to support the Children's Health Initiative or the Healthy Kids program, call 781-1606 or visit www.slohealthykids.org.

Flu Shots (cont.)

a flu shot. Call your pediatrician or local Public Health Department for an appointment. Flu season lasts through March, normally peaking in February, so November and December are good months to get a flu shot.

Pertussis (cont.)

years of age) or Adacel, (licensed for 11-64 years of age), a limited supply of both vaccines are available at the Public Health Department by appointment.

Please continue to report pertussis cases to the Public Health Department via the Confidential Morbidity Report and fax to 781-5543. The form can be accessed electronically at www.sloph.org, click on "Public Health Forms."

If you have any further questions, please call the Public Health Department at 781-5500.

Avian Influenza (cont.)

Hospitalized patients diagnosed with or under evaluation for influenza A (H5N1) should be isolated using airborne, contact and standard precautions, as well as eye protection with 3 feet, for 14 days after onset of symptoms unless an alternate diagnosis is established and/or infection with influenza A (H5N1) has been excluded. Outpatients or hospitalized patients discharged before 14 days should be isolated in the home setting for the same time period. For more detailed guidelines, please contact Communicable Disease Control at 781-5500.

San Luis Obispo County Reported Cases of Selected Communicable Diseases - Fall 2005

Disease	Jan.-June	July	August	September	Total 2005	Total 2004
AIDS	8	0	0	0	8	9*
Amebiasis	1	0	0	0	1	1
Brucellosis	2	0	0	0	2	1
Campylobacter	28	4	7	6	45	43
Chlamydia	267	38	63	35	403	474
Coccidioidomycosis	47	6	8	0	61	76
Cryptosporidiosis	3	0	0	1	4	53
E. Coli 0157:H7	3	1	1	1	6	2
Giardia	13	3	2	1	19	11
PPNG	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gonorrhea	22	3	9	3	37	37
Hepatitis A	4	0	1	0	5	4
Hepatitis B	29	7	8	6	50	41
Hepatitis C Acute	1	0	0	0	1	0
Hepatitis C Chronic	263	45	34	41	383	402
Hepatitis, Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	0	0	0	2
Measles (Rubeola)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningitis - Total	14	2	6	3	25	38
Meningitis - Viral	10	2	4	2	18	31
Meningitis, H-Flu	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pertussis	4	1	0	1	6	0
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salmonellosis	9	2	3	3	17	25
Shigellosis	0	1	1	2	4	2
Syphilis - Total	11	0	0	0	11	12
Tuberculosis	3	0	0	0	3	4*
West Nile Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Nile Virus Neuroinvasive	0	0	0	0	0	1

*Represents late reporting



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